

## SAMPLE NOTIFICATION LETTER FROM SCHOOL TO PARENTS AND STAFF

### School Letterhead

Date

Dear Parent or Guardian/Staff Member:

This letter is to inform you that varicella (chickenpox) has been reported in our school. **Any exposed person who has NOT been vaccinated for chickenpox or has NOT had the disease is considered susceptible (unprotected) and may develop and spread chickenpox to other susceptible persons.**

Chickenpox is a very contagious disease caused by a virus. It is easily spread through the air by sneezing and coughing or through contact with someone's chickenpox sores.

This virus usually infects younger children; however, older children and adults can also become infected if they haven't already had chickenpox or been vaccinated. Early symptoms may include aching, fever, and sore throat. Then a very itchy skin rash develops that may turn into as many as 400-500 sores.

**Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine** is routinely recommended for all children 12 months of age and older and for unvaccinated persons following exposure to or contact with someone with chickenpox. If varicella vaccine is given within 72 hours of exposure to chickenpox, it may prevent or reduce the severity of the disease. If your child is susceptible or you are unsure, please call your child's health care provider to discuss vaccination.

If your child has never had the disease or been vaccinated:

- Watch your child for the next 10 days to 3 weeks to see if a rash develops.
- If your child should develop a rash, do not send your child to school. Contact your child's health care provider so he/she can diagnose the illness and give you instructions for care.
- A child with chickenpox can return to school 6 days after the rash began or when all the sores are dry and crusted over.
- Susceptible household members or other close contacts who are pregnant or have a weakened immune system should inform their health care provider that they have been exposed to chickenpox. Babies born to mothers who develop chickenpox while pregnant may develop serious complications.

A "Question and Answer" sheet about chickenpox is included for your review. If you have additional questions, please contact the school nurse at:

Sincerely,

School Administrator